

The Dharma is for Children of All Ages

I just love the song, “Buddha Loves You”...it’s supposed to be a children’s song but it makes Buddhism so easy to understand for anyone.

*Fly, fly, little bird, Buddha loves you little bird,
Tweet, Tweet, Tweet-tweet-tweet-tweet tweet!*

*Run, run, little pup, Buddha loves you little pup,
Bow-wow, wow-wow-wow-wow wow!*

*Don’t cry pussy cat, Buddha loves you pussy cat,
Mew, mew, mew-mew-mew-mew, mew!*

*Swim, Swim, little fish, Buddha loves you, little fish,
(just open mouth like a fish)*



Kerry Kiyohara Sensei

This song teaches us that **it is all right to be who we are.**

Birds fly, so fly! Dogs run, so run! Cats are hard to understand, so be hard to understand! Fish can’t talk, so don’t talk! Why? Because **Buddha loves you just the way you are.** Buddha is like your mommy and daddy put together. Mommy and Daddy love you most of all, just as you are. They will do anything for your happiness. Mommy and Daddy will scold you when you deserve it. But not because they want to be mean to you. Mommy and Daddy get mad because they love you, they want you to learn important lessons in life. Mommy and Daddy will always love you, always worry about you, always want you to be happy, always work hard to give you the good things in life.

All you have to do is be yourself. **Be who you really are.** Be kind and gentle to every living thing. Protect all who are weaker than ourselves. Have you ever been teased or bullied? It’s not fun, is it? But did you know that bullies are bullies because they are afraid? Sometimes big kids are so scared that someone will discover they are actually afraid inside that they tease and bully smaller kids, weaker kids, kids who are different.

It hurts, it is not right, it is not fair. Life is like that sometimes. Your mommy and daddy would like the world to always be a safe and nice place for you. But sometimes there are bullies in your life. What should you do? Sometimes being kind to bullies, trying to understand why they are bullies, will change their hearts. Sometimes being gentle to bullies, not responding to teasing, will change their minds.

And sometimes, you must be strong and stand up to bullies, especially when they are teasing kids weaker than you. Then you must have the courage to be called a tattletale, and seek help from other kids, teachers, parents, or even the police. Did you know the mommies and daddies of bullies don’t want their children to be bullies? By standing up to bullies, you are being kind and gentle and strong, even if you feel scared inside.

Is it easy to be kind, gentle, and strong? No, it is not easy. Being kind and gentle, protecting all those weaker than yourself is difficult, especially when you are smaller than the bully. But, if you look inside your heart, you will find the Compassion you need to be kind and gentle. If you look inside your heart, you will find the Wisdom to think of a way to protect all those who are weaker than yourself. If you look inside your heart, you will find the Strength to be who you are.

Be Kind and Gentle. Be the Protector of the Weak. Be Strong and ask for help. Be who you are. Because Buddha loves you, just the way you are. **Remember that Amida Buddha is inside your heart.**

Remember that you are kinder, gentler, and stronger than you think. Be who you are. Be proud to be Buddhist. Just smile, be kind and gentle, and be strong, no matter what. Just say, 'please' and 'thank you' every time. Say mahalo to Amida, to mommy and daddy, to 'ohana, to teachers, and to friends for loving you just as you are.

And don't forget to make *sensei* happy by coming to Temple every Sunday, putting your palms together in *gasshō*, bowing your head, and saying *Namo Amida Butsu*, no matter what!



Kerry Sensei's Granddaughter, Melody